1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13



people living there,[1] which also leads me to conclude that the Ovimbundu as we now know them were not there at that date.

About 1661 there was an expedition from Benguela in order to restore a native ally, the 'Iaga Caconda', against an 'intruding Iaga' who used fire-arms.[2] This is the first record of fire-arms in native hands in the hinterland of Benguela. Muskets and powder were sold from the time of Luanda's founding (1576),[3] but not all tribes took to them quickly.[4] If fire-arms were already in use by natives in the Benguela hinterland in 1661, it is most probable that the founders of the present Umbundu dynasties had them when they came to the country. The first presídio of Caconda was built in 1680, destroyed soon after, and rebuilt nearby in 1685. This was at four or five days' journey from Benguela but not on the Plateau nor within the present Umbundu area. The third presídio, known as Caconda-Nova, was built at its present site in 1769. Most writers have supposed this fort to have been built at its present site in 1685, overlooking the fact that there were not two sites but three.[5]

*European Influences 1770–1840.* The governor who effected the final moving of Caconda on to the Plateau, D. Francisco de Souza Coutinho, also undertook many other reforms designed to better the economic state of the colony. He brought something of the intentions of the great Marquez de Pombal to this remote tropical dependency. He seems to have been the first governor of Angola to realize the immense superiority of the Benguela Highland,

[1] Cadornega, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 42–6.

[2] Cadornega, op. cit., p. 176 f. It is of interest that according to this author (1680) this expedition passed the Bay then known as 'Catumbella of Salt Water' or 'Catumbella of the Oysters'. Jaspert made the error of stating that this Bay (Lobito) was 'discovered by the English' about 1900!

[3] Garcia Mendes Castello Branco (1620) protested against allowing this traffic (*Da Mina ao Cabo Negro*, p. 25).

[4] In 1790 the Ovimbundu used fire-arms very well, but the 'Ganguellas' had not then adopted their use (*Annaes Mar. e Col., 5a Ser.*, p. 489).

[5] Lopes de Lima (*Ensaios*) made this error (or omission), and more recent writers have perhaps erred by following him. The correct accounts are given in the *Catálogo dos Governadores*, pp. 396 ff., 416 ff. (also to be found in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. iii, pp. 507 f., 528). The facts are most clearly brought out by the governor of the District of Benguela in reporting a visit made to Caconda. He gives a short history of the presídio and tells of having seen the ruins of the earlier forts (*Districto de Benguella 1892*, Lisboa, 1894). The report to the Ministry in Lisbon of the governor, D. Francisco Inocencio de Souza Coutinho, explaining (among other things) the moving of this presídio, and dated 18 Oct. 1769, has been published in *Arquivos de Angola*, vol. i, no. 1 (Oct. 1933).

A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows, clubs, spears, and several kinds of trap.(1) Nets and poison are not used. Every hunter makes his own arrow-shafts and feathers; the points are made by a blacksmith. On the night before leaving for a hunt, the *ukongo* calls in his fellow hunters to share a ceremony which includes dancing and the re-anointing of the weapons with beer and palm-oil.

*Communal hunts* usually take place in June-July, in the middle of the dry season, when large tracts of land are covered with grass ten or more feet high. The day for the hunt is set by the village headman; spears and arrows are prepared and, when the word is given, a party of about 30 men and boys move off to the assigned area of tall grass. A ring is formed round about two square miles of land, the hunters standing just within sight of each other. The grass is trodden down, fires started, and the animals killed as they rush from the flames. Antelope of many kinds, snakes, foxes, wolves, hyenas, mice and rabbits and occasionally leopards are killed in this way.

FISHING

In the Kunene and some of the other larger rivers fish are large and plentiful, and men go on communal fishing expeditions, and return with fish to sell.(2) Men usually fish with bark lines, women use basket-traps(3) and poisons. Poison is used, usually in the dry season, when the rivers are shallow. Both men and women use nets, and sometimes a fish-weir or *olunja* may be employed; this has an opening in the middle, in the lower side of which is placed a basket-trap. At the coast and along the Kwanza river dug-out canoes, about 20-30 feet long, are sometimes used for fishing.(4)

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The principal domestic animals are the cow *(onjindi)*, ox *(ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull *(onui)*, sheep *(omene)*, goat *(ohombo)*, pig *(ongulu)*, dog *(ombua)*, and chicken *(osanji)*.(5) The only transport animal is the ox, used both for riding and for drawing carts.(6)

Cattle are a measure of wealth, but few families own large herds. Childs lists the domestic animals in a typical village of 196 inhabitants as: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. Cattle are used for paying fines and debts, for funeral feasts, and for marriage payments. Cows are not usually milked, and cattle are killed for food only when they are aged or injured, or occasionally during the June-July period of food shortage. Treated hides are used to cover stools, and for making pouches and corn-bags.(7)

The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry

(1) Some hunters have guns, but the use of gunpowder is restricted by the Portuguese.
(2) Cashmore, op.cit., p.143.
(3) See Cashmore, loc.cit. for a brief description of the basket-trap.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.145.
(5) Ibid., pp.152-6.
(6) Childs, personal communication. Cf. Hambly, op.cit., p.152.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.153.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



175 [316] [325] Serpa Pinto saw shafts for the working of iron ore in the neighborhood of Cubango. The ore was mixed with charcoal and smelted in shallow pits. It is stated that the iron was sometimes tempered with ox-grease and salt. The bellows are of the type made at Elende (I, p. 128). Of the tempering process I have no confirmation.

175 787 [764] Somewhere near Bihé Serpa Pinto saw the ceremony of questioning a corpse which was made to sway to and fro, the people believing all the while that it does so without human intervention. The diviner declared that the soul of a dead person will tell who caused the death (I, p. 130). I observed and photographed this ceremony (Plate XLV, Fig. 1).

[695] The ordeal of the poison cup is described; blood-letting, and divination by shaking articles in a basket are also mentioned. Pinto says that in the articles that appear uppermost the diviner reads what his hearers are desirous of learning of the past, present, or future. Sorcery and rain-making are likewise briefly mentioned (I, p. 132). The divination basket, the poison ordeal, and rain-making, are Umbundu cultural traits today.

171 224 Here Pinto illustrates the existing practice of mounting the skulls of animals killed by a hunter on a pole in the village. There is a further reference to this custom among the Ambuellas (I, p. 333). These instances, combined with those personally noted, give a wide distribution for the practice (I, p. 177).

175 [304] Pinto saw the operation of tooth mutilation among the Luimba. The operation was performed with a knife which was struck by repeated light blows (I, p. 209).

[711] Pinto illustrates arrowheads in use in 1879 (I, pp. 277, 346). These are exactly the same as those made and used in 1929 (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

[412] Axes used by the Luchazi are sketched with a detail that shows the old forms to persist without alteration (II, p. 36).

[321] Water-pipes made from horns and gourds by the Luina of eastern Angola are of the forms now used in that region, also by the Ovimbundu of the present day (II, pp. 33, 37).

175 114 For use in checking and supplementing my observations Serpa Pinto's book was found to be of the greatest service, though the precise locality was sometimes difficult to identify. This explorer, in common with others, scattered his ethnological observations among descriptions of the route and botanical, zoological, and other notes.

Lux traveled from Loanda due east, following the Kwanza on the northern bank between 9° and 10° S. Lat., and so into Lunda.

824 *Okalalululuka.* This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease.
813 *Usendangulusse.* This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straight twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

## FOOD SUPPLY

### COLLECTING AND HUNTING

222 462 Collecting of natural products which serve as food substances is chiefly in the hands of women and children, though an exception has to be made in the instance of honey, which is gathered by men and boys.

Boys diligently search for nests, noting their location so as to be able to visit them again when the fledglings are large enough to serve as food. Large numbers of women and children may be seen 252 222 gathering caterpillars in gourds. The insides of the caterpillars are squeezed into boiling water to make soup.

When a cloud of locusts appears, as in 1925, the creatures are gathered. They are sometimes fried, or they may be boiled in water, dried, and preserved with salt in earthenware pots.

A number of miscellaneous items of the food supply were mentioned in connection with names of trees whose fruits are gathered.[1]

223 [411] Boys engaged in food-gathering usually carry small bows and blunt wooden arrows (*ocilavi*). One type of bird arrow is fixed to the bowstring. The forward end of the arrow is split so that it may contain small stones that are ejected when the string is released. From the wild fig tree mucilage is obtained and this is boiled until it forms a thick paste which is smeared on the boughs of trees. [231] Some of the small birds captured in this way are eaten, others are kept in wicker cages made by children.

343 171 In all parts of Angola large cylindrical beehives may be seen fixed high in the trees (Plate XC, Fig. 2). Two types of hive have been noted in particular. In the Elende district a hive is made by opposing two half cylinders of wood each about three feet long, so forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot. The ends are covered, with the exception of a small round hole. The whole structure is bound round with grass which is kept in position by lashings of bark. In the neighborhood of Cassanga a difference in the structure of the hives was noticed. This type of hive is made from a cylinder of strong reddish bark, the edges of which are fastened together with stout wooden pegs. The dimensions are the same as for the hive used in Elende, but the hive of bark is uncovered.

231 In the Elende district honey of wild bees is removed from the hives in the months of August and December. One man ascends

[1] [see pp. 138-140, category 116]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fiber, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire. The men wear no protection, consequently they are badly stung. Boys are encouraged to help, and those who run away receive no honey. Honey may be eaten alone or with manioc. No drink is made from honey only, but ocisau is the name given to beer with honey in it. *Ovingundu* is a drink made from pounded corn which has been soaked in water to which a little honey has been added. The drink is allowed to remain untouched over night; thus it becomes sweet and is mildly intoxicating. 231 263 273

Wax is a very important item of trade. In the remote places natives bring to small trading posts balls of wax which are about two pounds in weight. These in former days were a standard of exchange in terms of which other values could be measured. These balls of wax are made into large cakes for foreign export. In the Easle country a fiber strainer is used for cleaning the wax. Honey is sometimes dried in very large baskets which are three feet in diameter and two inches deep. These baskets were not observed among the Ovimbundu, but they are used in the region of Cassanga in southern Angola. The honey of wild bees when eaten in the comb is palatable; it would be more so if one could disregard the presence of numerous dead bees. 439 257 [436]

The bow is the chief weapon of the hunter. The release of the arrow is made with the index and middle fingers (Plate XXXIX, Fig. 1). I have observed this method among the Ovimbundu of the Benguela Highlands, in the region of Kipungo, in the far south among the Valcuanyama, and among the Vasele of the Novo Redondo hinterland. Arrows differ considerably in pattern as the illustrations show (Plate XVII, Figs. 1-9); the Ovimbundu have arrow-points of excellent workmanship. The manufacture of these arrow-points is one of the most skilled occupations of the blacksmith. Each man makes his own shafts and feathers them. The arrows of the Vasele have leaf-shaped iron points; so also have those used by the Valcuanyama. 411 171 224 [326]

Among the Ovimbundu are specialists who make bows from elastic woods called *usia* and *osambia*. The bow itself is *ohonji* and the arrow is *usongo*. At the third shot I saw a young Ocimbundu boy split a cane which was placed upright at a distance of thirty-three feet. The throwing club (*ohunya*) is used for killing small game such as hares. [463]

411 [237] The only spear (*unga*) that I have seen is made entirely of iron. The shaft is covered with the tail of an ox to which the tuft of hair remains attached. This is the spear formerly used in warfare. The distribution is wide. Such spears were purchased from the Ovimbundu of Elende and Bailundu and also from the Vakuanyama [439] living in the far south of Angola, but I do not think that the Ovimbundu make these spears, which are probably traded from the south.

224 (411) A hunter is considered exceptionally fortunate if he possesses an old muzzle-loading gun (*uta*). I have seen only two hunters who owned such a weapon. In one instance the barrel was bound to the stock with hide thongs, while the woodwork was decorated with brass tacks. Powder and fragments of metal are carried in a leather pouch which is attached to a broad, leather waist belt (Plate XIII, Fig. 6). There is certainly a feeling among hunters that the sale of a well-tried weapon will be followed by bad luck. The gun is sometimes fixed to form a trap in such a way that an antelope may tread on the string and so discharge the gun. Sometimes a piece of meat is attached to a string which is fastened to the trigger. A heavy beam of wood into which an iron spike is fastened was used in districts where the hippopotamus and elephant were hunted. Such a trap was fixed over a path known to be frequented by these animals. Big game of this type is now rare.

In the Esele country the following traps are in use: (1) A deep, narrow, grass-covered pit from the bottom of which sharp stakes project upward; this trap is known as *okueve*. (2) A simple trap consisting of four long sharp stakes which are fixed in the ground so that they incline toward a gap through which a buck is likely to jump (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 2). (3) The trap (*ocisonga*) for lions and leopards. This is a heavily built structure provided with a panel-like door which slides down when the entering animal releases a cord fastened to the bait (Plate XCII, Fig. 2). (4) A heavy trap triangular in form. This trap is not an enclosure, but a covering under which the animal has to go in order to reach the bait. In addition to the foregoing examples there is a trap (*onjanjo*) which is used for snaring antelope. The essential of the device is a loop which is bound to the end of a supple branch lightly fastened to the ground. This, however, did not come under my observation.

Long, cone-shaped, cane structures are placed in the grass, which is then fired. Animals disturbed and frightened by the fire rush into the wide end of the trap, then make their way to the narrow end (Plate XV, Fig. 5). One such trap is modified to form a snare with

285 Among the Ovimbundu are to be found baskets which they themselves seldom copy. These examples are from the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. The Vachokue specialize in making winnowing trays and rectangular baskets which are twilled by passing each weft over two or more warps.

By this technique, combined with the use of brown and black weft and warp, a great variety of geometrical patterns is produced. Trays of this kind vary in diameter from 50 to 200 cm. The Vachokue also make large strong trays in which honey is exposed to dry.

In the neighborhood of Cassanga wicker-work baskets are made. The warps or stakes are rigid while the more flexible wefts bend in and out. At this place there are both Ovimbundu and Vachokue inhabitants.

Women of the Vakuanyama in southern Angola make exceptionally neat little conical baskets by lashing coils very tightly. The lashing is done in such a way as to leave the outer surface covered with small chevron-shaped designs.

177 There is an intrusion of European influence which tends to mar
285 the work of the Ovimbundu and other native craftswomen. Soft dyes produced by methods described are sometimes replaced by brightly colored, imported dyes; old ribbons from typewriters are soaked in order to extract coloring. The Ovimbundu are imitating European forms of basketry in a few centers, though the native method of coiling is still used.

## WEAPONS

411 The bow of the Ovimbundu is made of hard red wood which takes a high polish after use. It is round in cross section and tapers considerably toward the ends. The length is usually 150 cm, not an inconvenient size in view of the fairly open bush through which the hunter has to make his way. The bowstring is made of a thin strip of twisted hide, which is looped over each end of the bow by a slip knot made of two half-hitches. A shoulder at each end of the bow shaft prevents the slip knot from passing down the shaft. In some examples only one end of the bow stave is notched. Usually, after completing the slip knot, the hunter leaves a surplus of bowstring which is wound round the shaft. One bow which is not notched has rattan wound round the stave to prevent the loops from slipping.

The bow for shooting bird arrows is small and is used only by boys; the string is of twisted vegetable fiber.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



The foregoing description applies to all bows collected in Elende, an Umbundu center; neither is there any appreciable difference between these bows and those of the Vachokue of the area from Cangamba to Saurimo in Lunda. The bows collected in the Vachokue region are on the average 10 cm longer than those collected at Elende, a structural difference probably connected with the heavier arrowheads used by the Vachokue (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

The Vakuanyama of southern Angola make and use a bow which bears very little resemblance to those already described. The arrows, too, are entirely different from those used by the Ovimbundu and Vachokue.

The lengths of three bows collected at Mongua, a typical Kuanyama center, are 111, 123, and 123 cm. The bow stave, which is made from a monocotyledonous wood, is 5 cm broad in the widest part, while the cross section is a flattened ellipse. The bowstring is of twisted leather, looped at each end for slipping over the ends of the bow shaft (Plate XVII, Fig. 8).

According to L. S. B. Leakey (A New Classification of the Bow and Arrow in Africa, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, 1926, pp. 259–294), the bows and arrows of Angola have not been studied. I am inclined to place the bows of the Ovimbundu and Vachokue with Leakey's "knotted string bows" (pp. 266–269).

Leakey states that the technique employed in stabilizing flight forms the best basis of classification of arrows, but so far as Angola is concerned, the shapes of arrowheads form a basis of classification according to locality. Ovimbundu, Vachokue, Vakuanyama, and Vasele, have distinctive patterns. Naturally there is borrowing of patterns where Ovimbundu and Vachokue intermingle, but, even so, there are distinguishing signs of Vachokue workmanship. The information respecting bows and arrows of Angola is best presented in paragraph form, and comparison of types is facilitated by reference to Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9.

The following arrows are used for killing birds:

(1) Elende. Ovimbundu boys use a wooden arrow with a heavy blunt head which is carved into five nodules (Plate XVII, Fig. 3). The head is tanged into a reed shaft and bound there with fine fiber covered with wax. The feathers are whole, bent over, and tied. The number of feathers varies considerably in different examples.

(2) Kipungo. The Vakipungo have a wooden-headed arrow with nine well-carved barbs (Plate XVII, Fig. 7). The head is socketed

J: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



223 411 fairly tightly into a reed shaft bound at the junction to prevent further splitting of the shaft. There are four whole, untrimmed feathers at the butt; these feathers are bent over and bound.

(3) Vakuanyama. Wooden arrows having eleven sets of barbs are in use. The head is bound into a reed shaft with strong gut. Another type of wooden arrow has three sets of barbs with three barbs in each set. There are four whole feathers at the butt.

(4) Vasele. The Vasele use an arrow, pointed with fine pieces of sharp bamboo, for shooting lizards (Plate XVII, Fig. 9).

411 171 The foregoing information (1–4) relates only to wooden arrows which are used by boys when hunting birds. The following paragraphs summarize the structural details of arrows used by men, and the data are arranged to call attention to differences in the patterns of arrows used by several principal tribes of Angola.

The Vasele make the arrow shafts of hollow reeds, and into these the narrow, ovate, iron heads are tanged and bound in position with fine bark which is not waxed. Three unsplit feathers are bent and tied to the shaft with fine bark fiber. The nock at the butt of the arrow is rectangular in shape and 0.3 cm deep. No quiver was observed.

The Ovimbundu form arrow shafts from hollow reeds, the average length of which is 76 cm. All arrowheads of iron are tanged and the tangs are inserted in the hollow reeds. A binding of fine bark fiber is given, and this is covered with wax. From five to ten feathers are used for each arrow. The feathers may be split or they may be left in the natural state. The trimming of the feathers is roughly executed. The depth of the rectangular nocks is 0.5 cm, and splitting of the shaft is prevented by binding the nock with fine bark. No quiver was observed.

The Vachokue of Cangamba, and thence northward to Saurimo, make arrow shafts of hollow reeds whose average length (79 cm) is a little in excess of those made by the Ovimbundu. The shapes of the iron heads are shown in comparison with those of the Ovimbundu (Plate XVII, Fig. 1). All arrowheads are tanged and bound into the hollow shaft with bark fiber which is then waxed. The feathers are split and bent with a neatness much greater than that shown in examples of Umbundu arrows. The rectangular nocks are 1 cm deep. No quiver was observed.

The Vakuanyama make solid wooden arrow shafts having an average length of 65 cm. The arrowheads of iron are socketed.

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Three prevailing shapes of arrowhead are conical, narrow ovate, and V-shaped. The quills are split, bent over, and tied. The usual number of feathers used for each arrow is eight. The workmanship is neat and symmetrical. The rectangular nock is 0.5 cm deep. A quiver of hide is used.

In addition to the assagai (Plates XIII, Fig. 8; LXVIII, Fig. 2) commonly used by the Vakuanyama and adopted to a very limited extent by the Ovimbundu, there are spearheads which originate in eastern Angola among the Vachokue, whose blacksmiths are expert.

Typical spearheads were collected at Munyangi where Ovimbundu and Vachokue cultures meet. The leaf-shaped blade and tang have a length of 30 cm and an average breadth of 4 cm across the blade (Plate XVI, Fig. 1). The upper part of the tang, made for insertion into a wooden shaft, is round in cross section while the lower part is square. The blade, which has a keen edge, is well graded from a central, raised midrib to the margin.

I did not observe many spears among the Ovimbundu and Vachokue. The former value highly a type of assagai which is owned by every man of the Vakuanyama. At Elende and Bailundu I obtained from Ovimbundu men assagais identical with those collected in the Vakuanyama country. The assagai is made entirely of iron: it has a narrow, leaf-shaped iron blade which is socketed to the iron shaft. The butt is sharply pointed. The shaft passes through a cow's tail on which the tuft of hair remains. Consequently the iron shaft is encased in hide for part of its length.

At Elende I obtained from Ovimbundu men two spears said to be a product of the local forge. The flat, narrow, leaf-shaped blades were tanged into very rough wooden shafts. Wax was thickly smeared over the junction. The workmanship, which followed the tanged method of hafting arrowheads, was extremely crude.

By far the most distinctive knives made in Angola are those manufactured and used by the Vakuanyama of the extreme south (Plate XVI, Fig. 10). I have never found this knife in use elsewhere in Angola, and similar types are to be found only among the Ovambo to the south of the Vakuanyama.

These knives vary in length from 48 cm to 73 cm, with a breadth of 5 cm to 7 cm across the scabbard. The general outline is a well-balanced ellipse. The wood used is hard in texture and dark red in color. On one side the scabbard is left open in such a way as to display the blade, which is long, keen, and tapering. A leather thong attached to the back of the scabbard provides means of attach-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



411 ment either to the arm or to the belt of the wearer. The crescent-
171 shaped expansion at the tip of the scabbard is sometimes held between the toes while the blade is withdrawn.

A small knife obtained from an Ocivokue man near Saurimo in the province of Lunda, northeast Angola, has a black wooden haft neatly bound with fine brass wire (Plate XVI, Fig. 2). The steel blade of Vachokue workmanship is eminently suitable for the purpose for which it is employed, namely, that of carving pipe bowls and snuff boxes, which are sometimes elaborately incised. The knife has a distribution from Saurimo to Cangamba, an area of intermittent Vachokue culture, but I have never observed it in the possession of an Ocimbundu. Men of the Ovimbundu have knives of somewhat poor quality. The roughly made wooden haft is attached to a blade which is protected by a sheath of lizard skin. More frequently than not, an Ocimbundu does not carry a knife; neither does he appear to have borrowed knives or the art of making them from the expert Vakuanyama or Vachokue, who are reluctant to part with their tools and weapons.

A knife used by Vasele men in the region of Vila Nova de Selles, in the hinterland of Novo Redondo, resembles one used by the Bangala of the Congo (Plate XIII, Fig. 1). The distribution of the implement, which is used for cutting branches from trees, is local in the Esele country. I have never seen such a knife in use among the Ovimbundu or in any other part of Angola. The preservation of this peculiar form, in common with other specialized traits of Esele culture, is due to isolation of the Vasele among hills difficult of access.

### LEATHER WORK

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of a hunter. The pouch usually contains scrap
[411] metal and powder for muzzle-loading guns. This type of firearm is, under present Portuguese regulations, difficult to obtain and still more difficult to furnish with powder, which is forbidden to the native. Consequently such a pouch may contain only a pipe and tobacco.

The pouch itself is either square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape (Plate XIII, Fig. 6). The hair may or may not have been removed from the hide. Some examples show signs of careful workmanship in stamping cross-shaped patterns. Brass-headed nails are used for decorative effect on these pouches among the Ovimbundu of Elende and as far south as Huila.

686 actually paid to redeem his brother and sister who were sold to pay the debts of his maternal uncle. Officialdom is one thing and actual [177] practice is another. Ngonga is right when he says that people appeal to the native law as laid down by the chief or king. If they are not satisfied they pretend a great respect for Portuguese law and therefore go to the Administrador.

## WARFARE AND SLAVERY

648 The Ovimbundu have been for centuries an organized people 726 possessed of a well-developed language, a legal system, and complex social organization. In trade and travel too, the Ovimbundu have been in the vanguard of African tribes. These reasons, in conjunction with the fact of numerical superiority and early contact with the Portuguese, would account for the success of the Ovimbundu in warfare. The defensive federations existing between the ten or twelve main political units, whereby they did not habitually war on each other, helped to assure success. Should the eldest son of a king's [643] principal wife be thought unsuitable as successor, a competent son of the deceased king was elected by a council of village chiefs.

411 There is no evidence that the Ovimbundu poisoned their weapons, neither do they do so today. The Ovimbundu do not use a shield at the present time, neither is it certain that they had shields in former times. A skin-covered powder-box was carried in the king's train when on the warpath.

718 Signaling-drums were about two feet long. They were made from a cylinder of wood over the ends of which skin was stretched. Signaling, which was accomplished by drumming with the palms of the hands, was the task of boys who resided in the king's compound, except when they accompanied him to war or on a trading journey. There was no system of smoke signaling. The iron war gong was named *ongonge*, but the instrument is nowadays tapped by the assistant of a medicine-man during his performance. In former times the gong was struck in the night to give assurance that the enemy was not in sight.

726 In war the oldest son of a king or of a chief went ahead of the war party accompanied by a few men who wore red leaves on their foreheads.

721 Intertribal jealousies, raiding for cattle and slaves, also reprisals for interference with caravan trade, were the chief causes of conflict with surrounding peoples. There was undoubtedly some internal warfare within the confederacy. The Ovimbundu of Elende, Bail-

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



was too light to make it effective as a tool or weapon (Plate XIII, Fig. 4). At Bailundu I was informed that an ax of this kind is used in a medicine-man's dance which is intended to cure a man who is sick because a spirit has entered into him. The sickness may have occurred because the man has broken a promise.

The medicine-man, or sometimes the patient himself, dances violently, meanwhile cutting about him with the ax (*omutaka*), which is finally used for killing a little pig whose blood is drunk by the sick man. This is the ritual that was previously mentioned in describing divination.

The following are important ceremonial objects: The ax *ekuva* (Plate XIII, Fig. 5) was the one used for killing slaves who were eaten at the death of a king. This object was secured in the Vasele country near Vila Nova de Selles. It is of handsome appearance, having a copper circle inlaid into the iron blade. A spear from Bailundu is likewise important because of its use in ritual (Plate XIII, Fig. 8). Before war and hunting this spear was thrust first into an ox then into a slave. The human and animal flesh were cooked together and eaten from the same pot. The female figure used by the medicine-man for consultation with regard to the correct path for a caravan has been described. A carved wooden post obtained from Bailundu was set up at cross-paths so that it might be visited by a sick person or his representative who would make sacrifice there.

Without parallel among ceremonial objects used by the Ovimbundu is a small wooden cloth-covered box from Bailundu. This contains a piece of root of cylindrical form tightly bound with cloth having at one end a cowrie shell. The box is the shrine of *Kandundu*, for whom a small hut is built in order to contain the box. Any one who sees the contents of the shrine is said to become blind. *Kandundu* is believed to be the "spirit of dreaming who makes swellings come on the body."

Antelope horns are in general use as containers of magical potions. One horn from Bailundu is used for holding sweet beer which is drunk by a person afflicted by bad dreams. A large horn with a piece of fur attached, also from Bailundu, is named *ocindiko*. The horn contains a mixture of fat and charcoal which is heated near camp after sunset, when men are on the march. The spreading fumes keep away lions and thieves. It was said that a thief is deterred because the fumes make him cough.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



recrudescence. Masks of eastern Angola most closely resemble those of the Bapindi of the southwest Congo, but the general background of these puberty rites is comparable in Angola, parts of the Congo, and in several parts of the forest belt of west Africa from Sierra Leone to Cameroon.

Usually there is seclusion, hardship, training in dances and tribal customs, with ceremonial reappearance and change of name. Evidently the Ovimbundu share the material traits and the psychological background of initiatory rites with a very large number of tribes, which occupy the forest zones of west and central Africa.

G. Lindblom's publication, "The Use of Stilts in Africa and America," helps to explain the occurrence of stilt-walking at the final ceremonies of initiation witnessed at Cangamba. Since stilt-walking in Angola occurs chiefly in the eastern section, perhaps one should link the trait with the stilt-walking in Nyasaland, because there has been continuous communication from Angola to Nyasaland along the Zambezi valley. The stilt-walking of eastern Angola may, however, be a cultural offshoot from the southwest Congo, for according to Lindblom the stilt-walking trait occurs there, and the contacts of eastern Angola with the southwest Congo have been important.

In turning from these factors of social life to traits of a more material kind, there are points of importance to be noted in connection with food supply and industries. A possibility exists that such traits as hunting, use of certain types of musical instruments, basketry, and pottery, will indicate that the Ovimbundu, before their separation, drew some of their fundamental traits from a widely distributed matrix.

## HUNTING APPLIANCES OF AFRICA

L. S. B. Leakey (A New Classification of the Bow and Arrow in Africa, *J.R.A.I.*, LVI, pp. 259–294) has dealt with the distribution of bows and arrows. Leakey states that, owing to lack of evidence, he was unable to describe the bows and arrows of Angola. I have therefore illustrated these in detail (Plate XVII, Figs. 1–9).

Some of the arrowheads used by the Ovimbundu resemble those of the Bashilele in the southwest Congo, but on the whole arrowheads used in Angola are of distinctive patterns, and presumably they represent a special local development. The round bow of the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue is like that of the southern Congo, and it is absolutely distinct from the short flat bow used in southern Angola among the Vakuanyama.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



171 411 The question of arrow release is important in this connection. R. B. Dixon (The Building of Cultures, p. 131), while discussing evidence from Wissler, Kroeber, and Morse, has plotted a map showing the distribution of types of arrow release in all parts of the world. The Ovimbundu (Plate XXXIX, Fig. 1) use the Mediterranean release, which is shown by Kroeber (Univ. Calif. Pub., XXIII, p. 286) to occur in the southwest Congo region along with the tertiary release. My illustration and Kroeber's description of the Mediterranean release show that the thumb is kept entirely out of the way. The string is engaged by the inner surfaces of the tips of the index and middle fingers. The engaging finger-ends are at right angles to the string.

Young boys often use the primary release when shooting blunt wooden arrows at birds. In this release the butt of the arrow is clasped between the end of the thumb and the middle knuckle of the index finger. Kroeber remarks that the primary release is almost invariably attempted by children and uninstructed novices, which accords with my observations made in Angola. Presumably boys of the Ovimbundu change their method of release from the primary to the Mediterranean when they handle a man's bow and arrows. The Mediterranean release was observed throughout Angola, with the exception of the primary release employed by boys.

G. Lindblom (I, Part I) assists in comparing hunting apparatus of the Ovimbundu with a large number of African forms.

The throwing clubs of the Ovimbundu are definitely like those of the Hottentots, Barotse, and Bushmen (pp. 120–126).

224 171 In Part II of his leaflet Lindblom discusses many kinds of traps. The trap built of heavy poles, which is used for catching lions, leopards, and hyenas, is used all over Negro Africa; there is nothing distinctive in the form and use of the Umbundu pattern. The cane rat trap of conical form is described and its distribution is plotted (pp. 52, 53, 56). Lindblom's map shows a clustering round the mouth of the Congo, also again at Long. 30° E. and Lat. 10° S. The blank for Angola can now be filled. These traps are used in many parts of Angola, notably among the Vasele of the northwest, at Elende, Ngalangi, and Cangamba. The use of this trap in Angola explains its presence among the Vakuanyama. On Lindblom's map the occurrence of the trap in south Angola is isolated from the general African distribution, but use of the trap is really continuous from the Congo estuary through Angola to the Vakuanyama.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



The use of bird-arrows with blunt, wooden knobs was common at Elende, and I collected sharp, barbed, wooden arrows from the Vasele, also from the areas of Kipungo and Mongua. This will assist in extending the information given by Lindblom (pp. 94–98). Lindblom's map (p. 99) indicates that bird-arrows are used round Lake Victoria Nyanza, at the junction of the Kasai and the Congo, and likewise among the Bushongo and the Bayaka. My observation of the distribution of wooden arrows in Angola links up these regions shown by Lindblom with the south of Angola. Perhaps a trans-continental diffusion in a southwesterly direction from Victoria Nyanza may be assumed, for it is unlikely that the diffusion would go counter to the generally accepted line of tribal migration which has been from northeast to southwest.

### AFRICAN POTTERY, BASKETS, AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

There is no reason to connect the pottery of the Ovimbundu with that of any particular region. The coiling method is far too widespread and generic to afford evidence of contacts. The Ovimbundu have evolved their own peculiar designs and forms.

In coiled basketry also the Ovimbundu have made special developments from a generic trait known in Egypt before 2000 B.C. Designs and dyes appear to be of local origin. My observation of African basketry does not suggest any particular parent form; moreover, resemblances of design may be misleading, for the nature of the material controls the shapes of the designs to a great extent in coiled basketry.

Wood-carving, on the contrary, links the culture of the Ovimbundu very definitely with that of the southwest Congo. Perhaps the work of Angola is most closely allied with that of the Bakuba, who excel in the carving of figurines, cups, and staffs.

H. Balfour's article (III) on the distribution of the friction drum helps to identify the form used by the Ovimbundu with types of this instrument from other African areas. The type from Elende is like that of Barotseland with which the Ovimbundu caravans were frequently in contact, while the large friction drum from Ngalangi is of the Bayaka pattern. The friction drum is widely used in the southwest Congo among the Bakwese, the Bambala, and the Baluba.

Thus far research has been able to show a large number of cultural traits of the Ovimbundu in relation to immediate culture contacts of the Congo basin, Rhodesia, and South West Africa (chapter X). In addition to this, many traits connected with social

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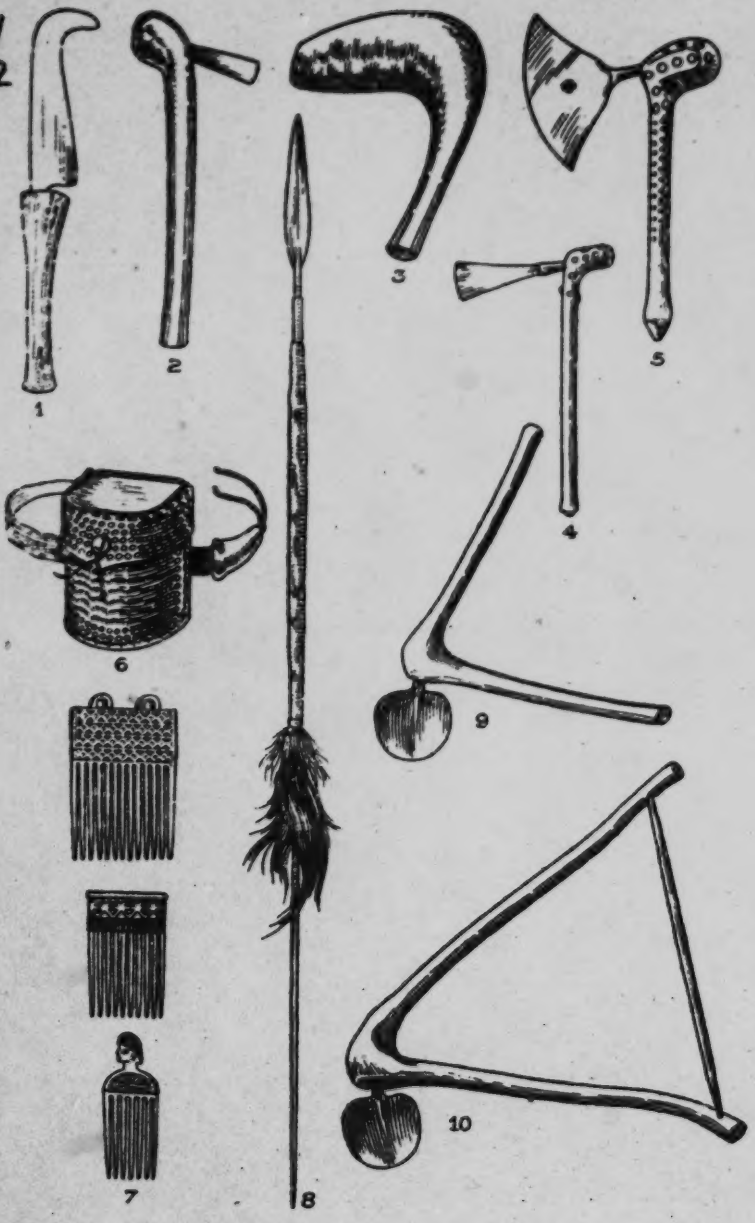


WOODEN COMBS, TOOLS, DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTS, AND WEAPONS

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3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunda FP13



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TOOLS AND WEAPONS

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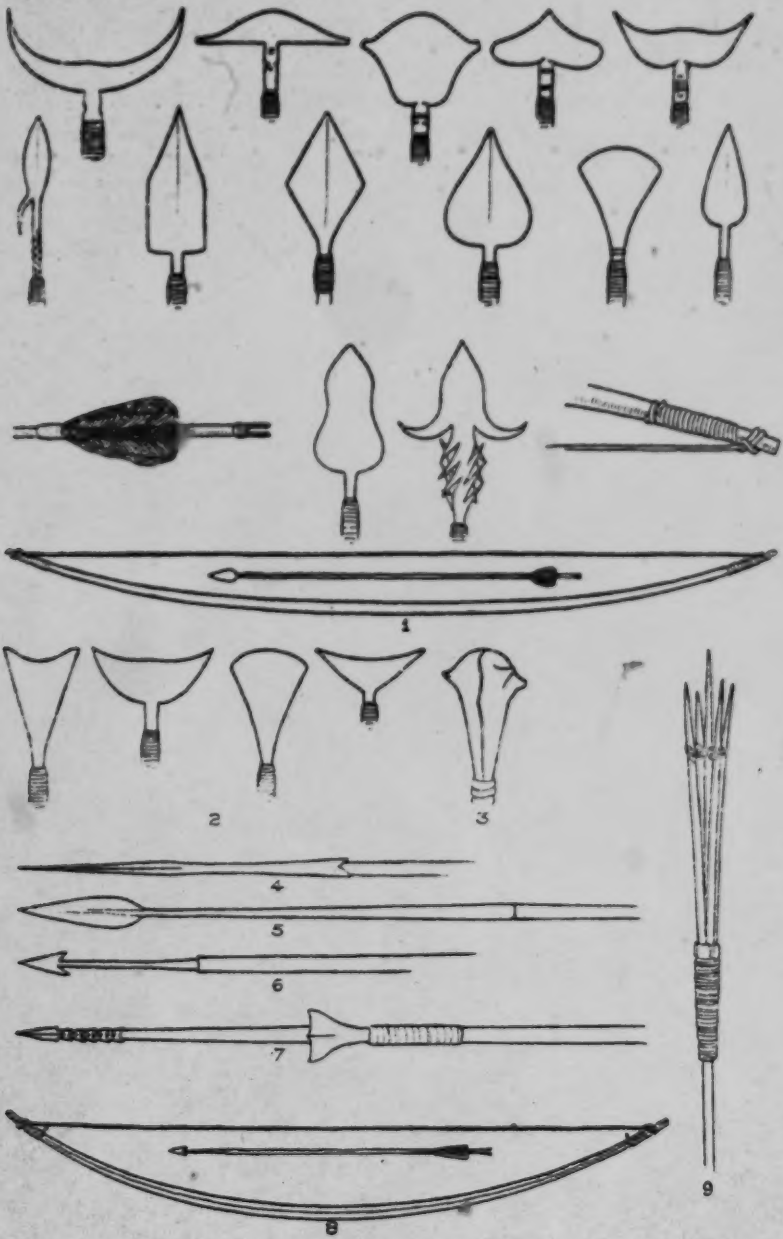


BOWS AND ARROWHEADS

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